

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 144622  
ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY ARA/CEN:DJOHNSON  
APPROVED BY S:CVANCE  
ARA:WHLUERS  
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-----034831 220053Z /63

O 212344Z JUN 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE  
INFO USMISSION USUN NY IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
AMCONSUL BELIZE  
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

S E C R E T STATE 144622

EXDIS FOR THE AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, UK, GT, BH

SUBJECT: LETTER TO FOREIGN MINISTER OWEN

1. EMBASSY IS INSTRUCTED TO DELIVER THE FOLLOWING LETTER  
FROM THE SECRETARY TO FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN REGARDING  
BELIZE: BEGIN TEXT:

DEAR DAVID:

"I HAVE BEEN BRIEFED ON TED ROWLANDS' MEETING WITH PHIL  
HABIB, MAY 31 AND JUNE 1 AND I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY  
TO DISCUSS BELIZE WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MOLINA AT GRENADA.  
I WOULD, THEREFORE, LIKE TO GIVE YOU SOME OF MY VIEWS ON  
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THIS ISSUE IN ADVANCE OF THE JULY NEGOTIATING SESSION.

"ON THE BASIS OF TED ROWLANDS' MEETINGS WITH PHIL, I  
DETERMINED THAT I SHOULD IMPRESS UPON FOREIGN MINISTER  
MOLINA YOUR DESIRE NOT TO HAVE THE NEGOTIATING DRAG ON  
FRUITLESSLY. THE TERRITORIAL ISSUE WAS PARTICULARLY ON  
MY MIND IN THESE CONVERSATIONS. I URGED MOLINA TO HAVE

HIS COUNTRY ADOPT A MORE FLEXIBLE APPROACH TO TERRITORY,  
AND AVOID A HARDENING OF POSITIONS WHICH COULD PUT GUATEMALA  
ON A SURE COLLISION COURSE WITH THE UK.

"I STRESSED TO MOLINA THAT IF THE MONKEY RIVER REMAINED  
THE "LIMIT" OF GUATEMALAN CONCESSIONS, THEN THE TWO SIDES  
WERE SURELY ON A COLLISION COURSE

"WE THEREUPON PROCEEDED TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS.  
THE MOST OBVIOUS, OF COURSE, IS SOME TERRITORIAL SETTLE-  
MENT NEGOTIATED BY THE TWO PARTIES. I BELIEVE SUCH AN  
EFFORT IS THE MEANS BY WHICH BELIZE COULD BE REASONABLY  
ASSURED OF TRANQUIL INDEPENDENCE AND DEVELOPMENT. HOWEVER  
WE MAY VIEW THE MERITS OF THE GUATEMALAN CLAIM, THEY  
CERTAINLY DO NOT VIEW THEM AS FRIVOLOUS. AN EMBITTERED  
REVANCHIST GUATEMALA WOULD CERTAINLY NOT BE THE MOST  
NOBLE BIRTHRIGHT FOR BELIZE.

"I WOULD, THEREFORE, URGE YOU TO GIVE THE MOST SERIOUS  
CONSIDERATION TO THE POSSIBILITY OF MAKING A TERRI-  
TORIAL OFFER WHICH GUATEMALA COULD ACCEPT. I LEAVE TO  
YOUR DISCRETION WHAT WOULD CONSTITUTE AN ACCEPTABLE OFFER,  
BUT RECALL THAT A LINE AT OR NEAR THE MOHO RIVER WAS  
DISCUSSED IN 1975.

"IF THE NEGOTIATED SOLUTION OUTLINED ABOVE WERE TO  
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FOUNDER, I BELIEVE THAT YOU SHOULD CONSIDER THE DESIRABILITY  
OF TAKING THIS MATTER BEFORE AN ARBITRAL PANEL. MOLINA  
AND I DISCUSSED SUCH A POSSIBILITY, AND MOLINA APPEARED  
RECEPTIVE. WE DID NOT DISCUSS THE MECHANICS OF AN  
ARBITRATION IN DEPTH, BUT I SUGGESTED A FORMULA WHEREBY  
EACH PARTY WOULD NAME AN ARBITRATOR AND THESE TWO WOULD  
TOGETHER APPOINT A THIRD. MOLINA REACTED POSITIVELY,  
RECALLING THAT SUCH A PROCEDURE HAD BEEN USED TO SETTLE  
THE GUATEMALAN-HONDURAS BOUNDARY SOME YEARS BACK.

"MOLINA ALSO TOLD ME HE HAD DISCUSSED BELIZE WITH SANTIAGO  
ROEL OF MEXICO, BUT BECAUSE OF MEXICO'S LATENT CLAIM TO  
BELIZE, A MEXICAN MEDIATORY EFFORT DOES NOT LOOK HOPEFUL.

"IN ALL, I BELIEVE THAT MY CONVERSATION WITH MOLINA WAS  
CONSTRUCTIVE AND POSITIVE, AND AM CONVINCED THAT MOLINA  
HAS PLAYED AND WILL CONTINUE TO PLAY A MOST VALUABLE ROLE  
IN THIS MATTER.

"AS THE JULY NEGOTIATING SESSION APPROACHES, I LOOK FORWARD  
TO LEARNING YOUR VIEWS ON THIS MATTER. THE U.S. IS MOST  
DESIROUS OF PREVENTING AN IMPASSE WHICH COULD DISRUPT

THE STABILITY OF THE AREA, AND WE WILL BEND OUR EFFORTS TO  
THIS PRINCIPAL END. I BELIEVE YOU SHARE THIS COMMITMENT.

"SINCERELY, CYRUS VANCE." VANCE

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** TEXT, POLICIES, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS  
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**Decaption Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**TAGS:** PBOR, UK, GT, BH, US, (OWEN, DAVID)  
**To:** LONDON  
**Type:** TE  
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